

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 OES-03 CU-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 L-03 AGR-05

CEA-01 COME-00 FRB-03 H-02 INT-05 LAB-04 NSC-05

AID-05 CIEP-01 SS-15 STR-04 TAR-01 TRSE-00 FEAE-00

OMB-01 SCA-01 CPR-01 SCS-03 NSF-01 /101 W

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: USINJC, IN

SUBJECT: INDO-U.S. JOINT COMMISSION MEETING IN OCTOBER - WORKING
DRAFT OF MINUTES

REF: STATE 218075

1. DURING COURSE OF MEETINGS ON OTHER SUBJECTS MINISTRY OF FINANCE OFFICIALS HAVE GIVEN US PRELIMINARY COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT MINUTES. WHILE FORMAL COMMENTS WILL BE TRANSMITTED VIA THE INDIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON, THE FOLLOWING BACKGROUND MAY BE HELPFUL.

2. FINANCE WOULD LIKE THE SECTIONS UNDER "INVESTMENT" WHICH ARE CRITICAL OF GOI POLICIES TONED DOWN OR ELIMINATED. OFFICIALS STATE THEY WANT A "POSITIVE" PICTURE TO EMERGE. WE HAVE COMMENTED THAT WHILE WORDING IS NEGOTIABLE WE CANNOT URGE NEW COMPANIES TO INVEST IN INDIA WHILE EXISTING FIRMS ARE PLAGUED BY A WIDE VARIETY OF PROBLEMS. SOME RECOGNITION OF THIS FACT AND GOI WILLINGNESS TO HELP IS DESIRABLE.

3. FINANCE IS DUBIOUS ABOUT THE SENTENCE RELATING TO NATIONALI-
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ZATION OR EXPROPRIATION. WE HAVE POINTED OUT THAT THIS GOES NO

FURTHER THAN THE STATEMENT BY MINISTER SUBRAMANIAM (NEW DELHI'S 10917). THEY ARE CHECKING FURTHER INTO THIS.

4. FINANCE THINKS THE LANGUAGE ON "POINTS OF CONTACT" IS "SOFT" AND WILL HAVE NO BITE IN AN INDIAN CONTEXT. WE AGREE AND PERHAPS THE LAST SENTENCE OF THIS SECTION COULD BE STRENGTHENED TO INDICATE THAT "KEY OFFICIALS" WILL HAVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROVIDING ANSWERS AND FOCUSING POLICY RATHER THAN JUST DISCUSSING PROBLEMS.

5. FINANCE IS EXTREMELY DUBIOUS ABOUT THE NEW WORKING GROUP ON PRIVATE SECTOR COOPERATION. OFFICIALS POINT OUT THAT THIS APPEARS TO BE ANOTHER GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT GROUP WHILE THE ACTION WILL BE ON A COMPANY TO COMPANY BASIS. THEY PREFER TO SEE THE COLLABORATION IN THIRD COUNTRY ISSUE HANDLED BY THE JOINT BUSINESS COUNCIL AND A SPECIAL MEETING BRINGING US FIRMS TO INDIA TO TAKE PLACE AFTER THE FIRST MEETING OF THE JBC. (PERHAPS THE WORKING GROUP COULD CONCENTRATE ON MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECTS, E.G., OFFSHORE OIL, MINERALS DEVELOPMENT, WHICH TEND TO BE IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR). SCHNEIDER

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